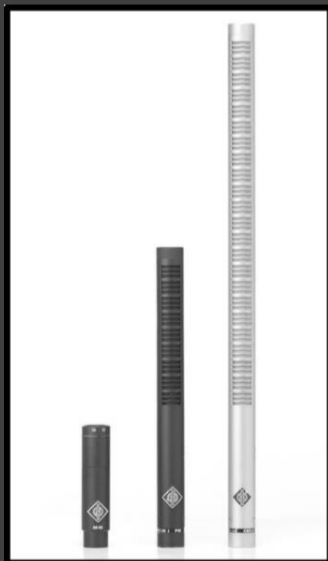


*Neumann KMR82
shotgun microphone*

*Shotgun category
mics are great for
recording effects
tracks!*



*Booming beyond a
mics range will
produce tracks that
have no separation
between the dialog
and the ambience.*

Group 3 SHOTGUN MICROPHONE

The shotgun group of microphone is the father of all shotgun microphones. The development and use of the hyper cardioid and short shotgun mics came later.

The shotgun microphone has a very tight pick-up pattern (shotgun pick-up pattern) for maximum cancellation of ambience, making it excellent for collecting effects with little or no ambience. This tight pattern gives the mic excellent reach, so when a big wide shot is framed, you can still record crystal clear dialog. If there is excessive ambience, the shotgun mic does an excellent job of cutting through the ambience and honing in on the dialog. The shotgun group of microphones have a minimum range of 4'. I've been successful recording dialog with a shotgun mic at 10'. However, due to its tight pattern you need to be very accurate when booming.

○ Neumann KMR 82 and Sennheiser MKH 70 are the professional series of shotgun microphones most widely used, and are quite expensive. There are no entry level models available.

Even though I see many video location sound operators using the shotgun group of microphone, in my opinion they are just too physically big, and the pattern is too tight. They are a big wide shot mics, more suited to slow paced film type shooting. They do a fantastic job of cancelling out ambience, but that's another reason why they don't fit in the video world. If you have recordings that are void of ambience, it takes time and money to build the tracks in post. And from an operating perspective, they are much too heavy for most of the booming techniques required on a video shoot. Since a lot of video is non-scripted, flying-by-the-seat-of-your-pants video shoot - you'll get burned over and over because of the mic's extremely tight pattern.

KNOW YOUR MICROPHONES

I've briefly covered the patterns of the various mics used for location audio not because I wanted to fatten the book, but because you need to understand their limitations. When I recommend you stay within the mic's range, stay within it's range! Jamming the mic (booming closer then the mic's minimum range) or booming beyond the mic's maximum range will result in poor recordings.

For example, if you use a short shotgun mic (range 2' to 4') and you boom 6" away from talent, the mic will be focusing somewhere around the talent's butt! You'll end up with washy sounding dialog. By booming too close, the voice ends up entering the cancellation ports as well as the pick-up pattern of the mic, causing all kinds of sound weirdness and possibly cancelling out the dialog. I've heard some pretty strange stuff when the boom op jams the mic's range.